GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:104
ANSWERED ON:28.07.2015
Agricultural Cooperation with Foreign Countries
Reddy Shri J.C. Divakar

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has signed agreements with various countries in the field of agriculture in the recent past and if so, the details thereof, country-wise;

(b) the external assistance sought and provided by these countries;

(c) the benefits accrued to the country as a result thereof;

(d) whether the Government is aware that farm productivity in the country is one of the lowest in the world and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to boost agricultural research and improve the functioning of research institutes/organisations so that the country becomes self-reliant in the field of agriculture?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
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(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 104 DUE FOR REPLY ON 28TH JULY, 2015.
(a): Yes, Madam. Ministry of Agriculture has signed 16 MoUs/Agreements with other countries for cooperation in the field of agriculture during last five years. Details of these MoUs/Agreements are as under:

Year Country(s)
2010 Malawi, Botswan, South Africa, Tajikistan, Austria, USA, Argentina;
2011 Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Bangladesh;
2012 Sri Lanka, Australia, Vietnam;
2013 --
2014 Morocco, Vietnam
2015 (till date) Mongolia

(b) & (c): Such bilateral MoUs do not involve grant of financial assistance. However, the benefits that accrue as a result of such MoUs/Agreements in the field of agriculture and allied sectors are generally in the form of mutual exchange/visits of scientists, mutual exchange of technical expertise, exchange of germ-plasm, transfer of technology, setting up of centers of excellence in different fields to demonstrate new technologies etc. Such cooperation also facilitates creation of opportunities for trade in agricultural commodities. India's strategic interests are also served through partnerships with other countries.

(d): No, Madam. Infact, the country is largely self sufficient in food grain production and as per Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO)'s statistics India's productivity per hectare was higher than the average World productivity in crops like Wheat, Rice, Barley, Maize, Sorghum, Chick peas, Pigeon peas, Lentils and pulses etc., in the year 2013.
Contdâ€¦2/-

(e): (i) In order to strengthen the research work in the country, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) conducts basic and strategic research related to improvement of field crops, horticultural crops, livestock, fish and through 100 commodity/theme based research institutes and 60 All India Coordinated Research Projects (AICRPs) and All India Network Projects (AINPs), mostly situated in State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) to develop location specific crop/horticultural crop varieties, livestock/fish breeds and varieties and matching production technologies as per the agro-ecological needs.

ii) To strengthen the crop/livestock/fish improvement programmes, emphasis, has been given to development of new crop varieties/hybrids/breeds with improved quality and tolerance/resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses.

iii) The traits of higher harvest index and partitioning for better economic yield have been targeted in development of high yielding varieties of rice, wheat, chickpea, pigeonpea and mustard crops. Concerted efforts have also been made to expand the hybrid technology in rice, mustard and maize to break the yield barrier through hybrid vigour. ICAR envisions a scenario of judiciously integrating conventional plant breeding, molecular biology, bioinformatics, genetic engineering, human resource and infrastructural development during XII plan. In order to ensure quality seeds of improved varieties/hybrids to the farmers for cultivation and boost the productivity and production in major crops, ICAR has also developed well-structured science and development programmes of breeder seed production of different crops. In addition, the improved varieties and production technologies are demonstrated at the farmers' fields by the ICAR institutes, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) and Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) through frontline demonstration (FLD) programmes to create awareness among the farmers.

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